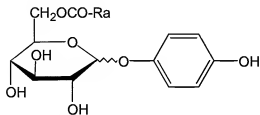


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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Currently amended)** An arbutin ester compound represented by formula (1):

Formula (1)



wherein Ra is selected from the group consisting of:

$R_1\text{-CH=CH}_2$, wherein R_1 is a single bond, an alkyl group or an arylene group;

$R_1\text{-C(CH}_3\text{)=CH}_2$, wherein R_1 is a single bond, an alkylene group or an arylene group;

$R_1\text{-COOCH=CH}_2$, wherein R_1 is a single bond, an alkylene group or an arylene group;

$R_1\text{-COOH}$, wherein R_1 is a single bond, an alkylene group or an arylene group;

$R_1\text{-COO-R}_2$, wherein R_1 is a single bond, an alkylene group or an arylene group; and R_2 is an alkyl group or an aryl group; and

$R_1\text{[R}_3\text{-CH=CH-R}_4\text{]X-R}_5\text{-CH}_3$, wherein R_1 , R_3 , R_4 and R_5 are each independently a single bond, an alkylene group or an arylene group; and X represents a number of repeating units and is 1 to 6;

$R_1\text{-C(CH}_3\text{)}_3$, wherein R_1 is a single bond, an alkylene group or an arylene group; and

$R_1\text{-CH}_3$, wherein R_1 is a single bond, an alkylene group or an arylene group.

- 2.-10. **(Canceled)**

11. **(Previously presented):** A composition that inhibits tyrosinase comprising, as an active ingredient, at least one of the arbutin ester compounds according to claim 1.

12. **(Previously presented):** An external preparation for the skin, comprising the composition according to claim 11.